Need to make arrangement for purchase of Natural Rubber at minimum support price rates

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN (Kerala): Sir, through this Special Mention, I would like to emphasise the need to make arrangements for the purchase of natural rubber at the MSP rates.

Due to heavy fall in the prices of natural rubber, which continued for several years, the rubber growers in our country are facing untold miseries. Due to the heavy losses faced by the growers during the past few years, they have become heavily indebted and are unable to pay even the interest amount. In these circumstances, the rubber growers are becoming desperate and they are committing suicide. Even though the Government has declared the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for natural rubber, there is no agency to purchase the rubber at the MSP rates. Therefore, the Government should make arrangements for the purchase of rubber at the MSP rates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri R.S. Gavai. Not present.

GOVERNMENT BILL

THE EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1999

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I move:

> "That the Bill further to amend the Explosive Substances Act, 1908, be taken into consideration".

Sir, as the hon. Members are aware, the Explosive Substances (Amendment) Bill, 1998, was passed by the Lok Sabha on 17th, December, 1998, but before the Bill could be taken up in this august House, the 12th Lok Sabha was dissolved and the Bill, accordingly, lapsed. For the information of this august House, I would like to mention that the incidents of bomb explosions have been on the increase in the recent past in various parts of the country, particularly in the States of Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and the North-East, and there have been immense loss of life and property. The frequent occurrence of such incidents has adversely affected the security environment in the country and has created a serious law and order situation. Enquiries have revealed that the terrorists and anti-social elements are increasingly using sophisticated

explosives like RDX (Research Development Explosive), PETN (Penta Erythritol Tetra Nitrate) and other similar types of explosive substances in carrying out their nefarious activities. These improved variety of explosives are difficult to detect in the normal course and are far more lethal and damaging than conventional explosives.

Since the existing Explosive Substances Act, 1908, makes no distinction between offences involving the use of conventional types of explosives, compared with the improved and sophisticated types of lethal explosives, a review of the provisions of the existing Act was conducted by the Ministry of Home Affairs so as to make its provisions more stringent in respect of explosions carried with the use of sophisticated explosives like RDX and PETN.

The Bill was introduced in this august House on 23.12.1999 and was considered by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Home Affairs at its meeting held on 8.2.2000. In their report presented to the House on 15.3.2000, the Committee had made certain recommendations for consideration of the Government. These recommendations have been considered, in consultation with the Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. I am happy to inform that the recommendations of the Committee have been, by and large, accepted by the Government; and, based on the recommendations of the Committee, certain amendments are proposed to be made to the pending Bill, as per my notice dated 6th November, 2001; these are the following:- (1) Clause 2 (b) of the Bill is proposed to be amended to enable Central Government to include any new special category 'explosive' substance by issue of a notification. It is proposed to recast the wordings of Sections 3,4 and 5 of the Act so as to prescribe minimum punishment for various offences and to enhance the level of punishment under these Sections of the Act to the level of death penalty and rigorous imprisonment for life, in case where RDX, PETN and other similar types of explosives or combination thereof, and remote control devices are used to cause such explosions. (3) It is proposed to add a new clause in the Bill so as to provide for the exercise of powers of sanction of prosecution by the District Magistrate in the States/Union Territories, in place of the Central Government.

With the above, I request that the Explosive Substances (Amendment) Bill, 1999, be considered and passed by this august House.

The question was proposed.